

Children need vaccines to protect them from 14 serious, even life-threatening diseases. Immunizations offer safe and effective protection from vaccine preventable diseases. To prevent outbreaks from occurring in school settings and other places where children congregate, a high percentage of children must be immunized.

Immunization requirements for schools vary by state. Over time, Michigan laws have been implemented to ensure that children are adequately immunized against vaccine preventable diseases:

- 1978: Michigan law requires that each student, upon entry into kindergarten or into a new school district involving grades 1-12, possess a certificate of immunization at the time of registration or not later than the first day of school.
- 2000: *Public Act 89* mandated an immunization assessment be completed for each sixth grade student.
- 2010: additional vaccine requirements were added.
- 2012: Senate Bills 237, 238, and 239 were passed by the Michigan legislature to move the sixth grade assessment to seventh grade.
- 2014: new educational requirement for Michigan parents opting their children out of getting vaccinated before entering school.

Prior to a child entering or attending school, parents or guardians are required to produce documentation confirming their child has received the school required immunizations, or in the alternative, their child received at least one dose of each of the required immunizations and is awaiting receipt of subsequent doses to be administered at appropriate intervals. In the following tables these children are considered “complete.”

A required vaccine may be waived or delayed if:

- 1) A valid medical contraindication exists precluding the child from receiving the vaccine. A medical waiver must be completed and signed by the child's physician and shall state the contraindication(s), the vaccine(s) involved, and the time period during which the child is precluded from receiving the vaccine(s).
- 2) The parent or guardian holds religious or philosophical beliefs which preclude receipt of a vaccination(s). Any parent/guardian who wants to claim a nonmedical waiver will need to receive education regarding the benefits of vaccination and the risks of disease from a county health department before obtaining the certified nonmedical waiver form through the Local Health Department. An updated waiver must be presented each time the child's immunization status is reported.

Additional information on immunization waivers can be found [here](#).

Each year schools are required to report the immunization status of children enrolled in kindergarten and 7<sup>th</sup> grade (6<sup>th</sup> grade prior to 2014) and new entrants to the school district. The following report summarizes the immunization status of school children in Michigan and provides some historical trends.

During the 2013-14 school year Michigan had the 4<sup>th</sup> highest waiver rate for kindergarteners [compared](#) to other US states. Figure 1 shows the percentage of children receiving immunization waivers over time.

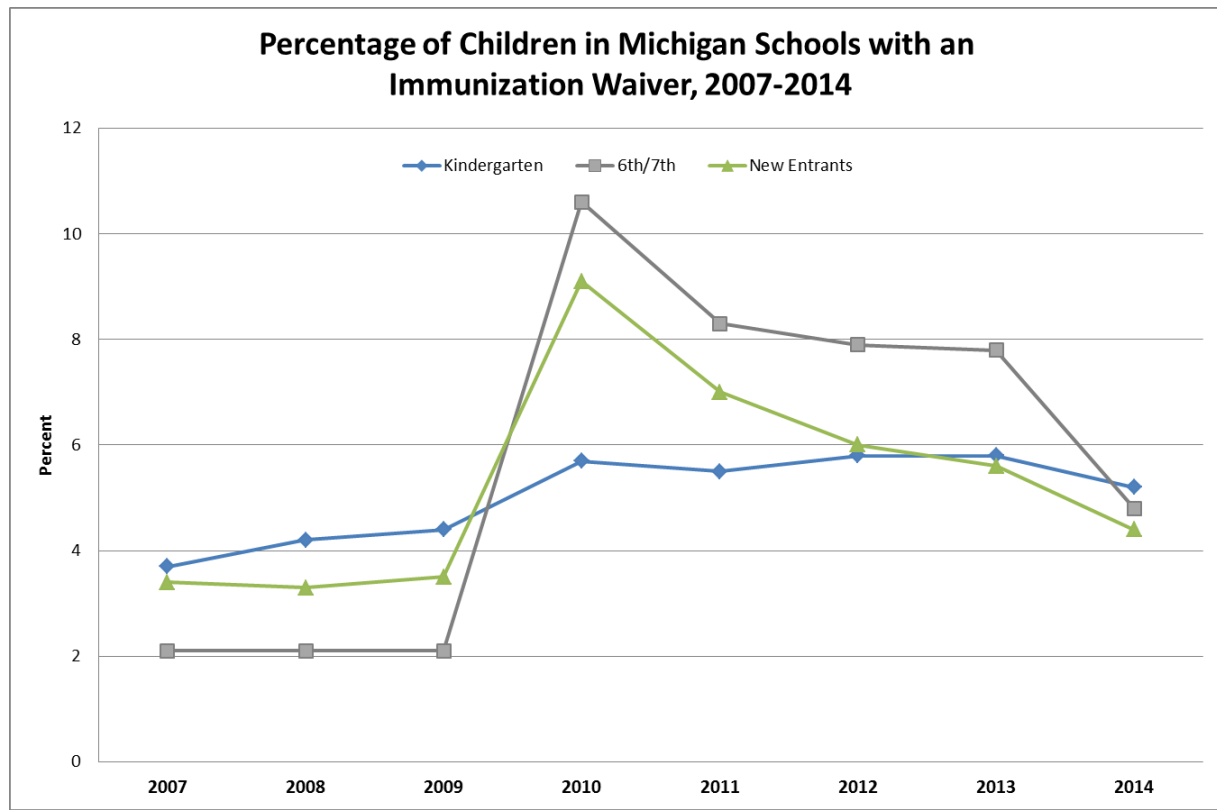
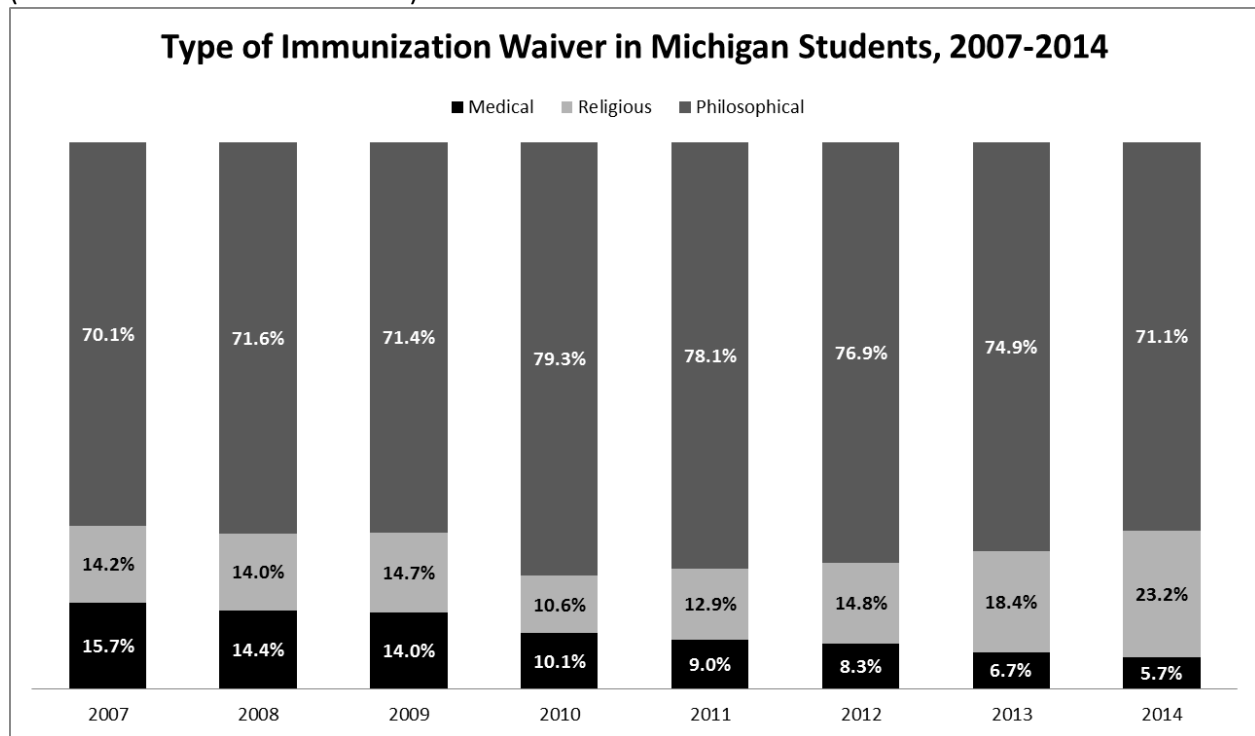


Figure 2 shows that since 2007 there is a decrease in the percentage of children receiving a medical immunization waiver; in the last 4 years there is an increase in religious immunization waivers (10.6% in 2010 to 23.2% in 2014).



**Summary of Kindergarten Students**

Table 1 shows the immunization status of kindergarten children in 2013 and 2014. There are a small number of schools who have not submitted their final reports for 2014; these data will be updated when all reports are finalized.

Overall immunization waivers for kindergarten students decreased from 5.8% of children with a waiver in 2013 to 5.2% in 2014. In 2014 the percentage of children with an immunization waiver was higher in private schools (10.0%) than public schools (4.9%).

Table 1: Kindergarten Immunization Assessment, 2013-2014.

	2013			2014		
	Total	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private
Number of Reporting Schools	2,133	1,644	489	2,102	1,626	476
Number of Students	119,946	110,557	9,389	117,168	108,104	9,064
Number of students complete	110,224 (91.9%)	102,114 (92.4%)	8,110 (86.4%)	107,841 (92.0%)	100,018 (92.5%)	7,823 (86.3%)
Total number of immunization waivers	7,000 (5.8%)	6,061 (5.5%)	939 (10.0%)	6,184 (5.2%)	5,280 (4.9%)	904 (10.0%)
Medical waivers	568 (0.5%)	499 (0.5%)	69 (0.7%)	388 (0.3%)	334 (0.3%)	54 (0.6%)
Religious waivers	1,243 (1.0%)	1,079 (1.0%)	164 (1.7%)	1,361 (1.2%)	1,174 (1.1%)	187 (2.1%)
Philosophical waivers	5,189 (4.3%)	4,483 (4.1%)	706 (7.5%)	4,435 (3.8%)	3,772 (3.5%)	663 (7.3%)

**Summary of Seventh Grade Students**

The school reporting requirements moved from 6<sup>th</sup> grade to 7<sup>th</sup> grade from 2013 to 2014. The change was made to help alleviate some challenges caused by trying to vaccinate 11-year-old students by the time they enter 6th grade. The reporting of 7th grade students also fits better with the nationally recommended immunization schedule. There are a small number of schools who have not submitted their final reports for 2014; these data will be updated when all reports are finalized.

The percentage of students complete for the vaccines they were recommended increased from 88.3% in 2013 to 93.1% in 2014. Immunization waivers decreased from 7.8% in 2013 to 4.8% in 2014.

Table 2. Sixth/Seventh Grade Immunization Assessment, 2013-2014.

	2013 (6 <sup>th</sup> Grade)			2014 (7 <sup>th</sup> grade)		
	Total	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private
Number of Reporting Schools	1,411	1,033	378	1,225	927	298
Number of Students	116,157	108,202	7,955	113,227	106,895	6,332
Number of students complete	102,582 (88.3%)	96,017 (88.7%)	6,565 (82.5%)	105,384 (93.1%)	99,747 (93.3%)	5,637 (89.0%)
Total number of immunization waivers	9,032 (7.8%)	8,197 (7.6%)	835 (10.5%)	5,381 (4.8%)	4,893 (4.6%)	488 (7.7%)
Medical waivers	556 (0.5%)	499 (0.5%)	57 (0.7%)	299 (0.3%)	272 (0.3%)	27 (0.4%)
Religious waivers	1,291 (1.1%)	1,158 (1.1%)	133 (1.7%)	1,196 (1.1%)	1,100 (1.0%)	96 (1.5%)
Philosophical waivers	7,185 (6.2%)	6,540 (6.0%)	645 (8.1%)	3,886 (3.4%)	3,521 (3.3%)	365 (5.8%)

**Summary of New Entrants to the School District**

When students enter a new school district their immunization status is assessed to ensure they are up-to-date with all of the vaccines they are recommended to receive. From 2013 to 2014 the percentage of new entrants with an immunization waiver decreased from 5.6% to 4.4%. There are a small number of schools who have not submitted their final reports for 2014; these data will be updated when all reports are finalized.

Table 3. Immunization Assessment of New School Entrants, 2013-2014.

	2013			2014		
	Total	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private
Number of Reporting Schools	3,690	3,230	460	3,672	3,192	480
Number of Students	189,727	175,829	13,898	196,548	181,938	14,610
Number of students complete	173,832 (91.6%)	161,755 (92.0%)	12,077 (86.9%)	182,524 (92.9%)	169,455 (93.1%)	13,069 (89.5%)
Total number of immunization waivers	10,712 (5.6%)	9,545 (5.4%)	1,167 (8.4%)	8,633 (4.4%)	7,568 (4.2%)	1,065 (7.3%)
Medical waivers	670 (0.4%)	581 (0.3%)	89 (0.6%)	463 (0.2%)	383 (0.2%)	80 (0.5%)
Religious waivers	2,393 (1.3%)	2,108 (1.2%)	285 (2.1%)	2,137 (1.1%)	1,911 (1.1%)	226 (1.5%)
Philosophical waivers	7,649 (4.0%)	6,856 (3.9%)	793 (5.7%)	6,033 (3.1%)	5,274 (2.9%)	759 (5.2%)